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# PASSPORT TO CULTURE

8th Season

2004-2005

Teacher's Resource Guide for  
**iSOFRITO!**

David Gonzalez with Larry Harlow & The Latin Legends Band featuring Yomo Toro

Grades 3-6



Master storyteller David Gonzalez with Larry Harlow and The Latin Legends Band and special guest Yomo Toro serve up a Three Kings Day celebration with *iSofrito!* – a sizzling, spicy performance of storytelling from the Latin tradition mixed with a heaping helping of hot salsa and new sounds. This winning recipe of stories, songs, chants, music, dance, and audience participation makes the rich Latino culture – from Puerto Rico all the way to the Bronx – come to life with a delicious vibrancy.



The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) Arts Education Department presents the seventh season of the *Verizon Passport to Culture SchoolTime Performance Series*.

With *Passport to Culture*, Verizon and NJPAC open up a world of culture to you and your students, offering the best in live performance from a wide diversity of traditions and disciplines. At NJPAC's state-of-the-art facility in Newark, with the support of Verizon, the SchoolTime Performance Series enriches the lives of New Jersey's students and teachers by inviting them to see, feel, and hear the joy of artistic expression. The exciting roster of productions features the most successful New Jersey companies as well as performers of national and international renown. Meet-the-artist sessions and NJPAC tours are available to expand the arts adventure.

To help you enhance the live performance experience for your students, NJPAC provides this Teacher's Resource Guide and professional development workshops designed to reinforce the educational value of each production in the series.

The *Verizon Passport to Culture SchoolTime Performance Series* can make a world of difference – to your students and to you – right here in New Jersey, at NJPAC.

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Teacher's Resource Guides are available on the Internet at [www.njpac.org](http://www.njpac.org). Click on Education, then on Performances, then on Curriculum Materials.

# TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS

The resource guide accompanying each performance is designed:

- to maximize students' enjoyment and appreciation of the performing arts;
- to extend the impact of the performance by providing discussion ideas, activities, and further reading that promote learning across the curriculum;
- to promote arts literacy by expanding students' knowledge of music, dance, and theater;
- to illustrate that the arts are a legacy reflecting the traditional values, customs, beliefs, expressions, and reflections of a culture;
- to use the arts to teach about the cultures of other people and to celebrate students' own heritage through self-expression;
- to reinforce the New Jersey Department of Education's Core Curriculum Content Standards in the arts.

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## THIS PERFORMANCE & THE NJ CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT ARTS STANDARDS

*iSofrito!* will help teachers fulfill the Core Curriculum Content Standards for Performing Arts. The support materials in the Teacher's Resource Guide offer substantial background material on the historical, social, and cultural influences that have contributed to the music and oral traditions of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and other areas in the Caribbean, as well as to contemporary America. Watching the performance and participating in the suggested subsequent discussion, analysis, and written critique of the performance will increase and exercise students' aesthetic awareness. Suggested exercises increase students' critical thinking skills, and encourage students to present their research and analysis in written and oral form. Students are asked to produce additional art forms from what they learn. The performance and suggested activities also relate to language arts, world languages, and science curricula.



*Sofrito*, the traditional Caribbean salsa or sauce made of olive oil, onion, spices, and tomato sauce, helps create the distinctive, rich flavor of the islands' cooking. David Gonzalez with Larry Harlow and The Latin Legends Band and special guest Yomo Toro use this metaphor to describe the unique combination of traditional and contemporary elements in their theatrical and musical presentation, *iSofrito!* The stories David tells include traditional tales from Puerto Rico, and Cuba, as well as original stories from his own childhood in the Bronx. The original score is performed by Larry Harlow and The Latin Legends Band and Yomo Toro. It was composed by David and Larry Harlow, the band's director, and incorporates traditional salsa, *bomba*, and *jibaro* with contemporary funk, soul, and rap. The main instruments are piano, synthesizer, drums, and bass. The effect is a seamless blend of music and storytelling that is enjoyed by audiences of any age. David says "*iSofrito!* is like a visit to a Latino family where stories are told, music is played, people dance, and a certain irresistible flavor for life is cooked up."

## The Stories

*Milomaki* is a pre-Colombian transformation tale of the Taino people from the rain forests of Borinquen or Puerto Rico. Milomaki is a hermit who heals the sick through his songs. One day, all the fishermen of the village become very ill. Milomaki's healing song takes so long, that when the fishermen recover, they find all their fish rotting in the sun. Blaming Milomaki for their ruin, the fishermen tie him up, surround him with bundles of wood and set the wood aflame. Milomaki sings:

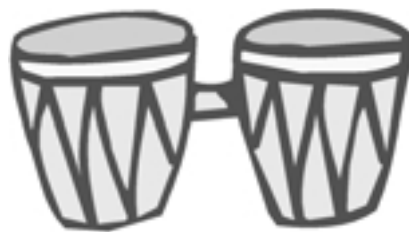
*Mi canto es como la lluvia*  
My song is like the rain  
*de este bosque tropical*  
of this heavenly wood.  
*da fuerza y cura*  
It gives life, love, and health,  
*y quita todo mal.*  
Makes you feel, oh, so good!

When the smoke clears, a *palma real* or royal palm tree stands tall and proud in Milomaki's place.



Milomaki has become a tree through his magical song.

A seasonal story tells how *Three Wise Men* saw an unusual celestial phenomenon in the East. Placing their trust in this stunning occurrence, they followed its light to Bethlehem and the infant in the manger. The tale is accompanied by a traditional Puerto Rican *aguinaldo*, one of the songs sung on January 6th as carolers celebrate the holiday in the village streets. The music



will feature Yomo Toro, one of Puerto Rico's most beloved musicians, playing *cuatro*, the island's traditional 10-stringed, guitar-like instrument.

*The Power of the Drum* comes from Afro-Cuban folklore. Chango, an *orisha*, trades his power to foretell the future for the power to play the drum.

*The Man Who Could Make Trees Sing* is a true story about an uncle who promised he could perform a miracle and the great surprise when he actually did!



David Gonzalez, Doctor of Arts, storyteller, musician, and poet, created the critically acclaimed shows *¡Sofrito!* with Larry Harlow and The Latin Legends Band, and *MytholoJazz* with the D.D. Jackson Trio. Both enjoyed sold-out runs at Broadway's New Victory Theater. He received national praise for *Double Crossed: The Saga of the St. Louis*, commissioned by the Smithsonian Institution and featured at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. In 1998, he was honored with the Helen Hayes Performing Artist of the Year Award. David also wrote *The Secret of the Ceiba Tree*, a community-based multi-media work in conjunction with Cleveland Playhouse Square with the support of a Lila Wallace Readers Digest Arts Partners grant. His one-man play with music, *Finding North*, based on the Underground Railroad, premiered at the Tony-Award winning Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. David's poetry was featured at Lincoln Center's Out-of-Doors Festival in 2001, in Bill Moyers' documentary *Fooling with Words* on PBS, and on NPR's *All Things Considered*. "The Poetic License Band," a Latin-jazz/spoken word project featuring David



David Gonzalez

and Grammy-nominated drummer Bobby Sanabria, received excellent notices for their debut CD *City of Dreams*. A multi-media staged presentation of *City of Dreams* recently premiered at La Mama in New York City and at the University of Maryland's Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center.

David received his doctorate in Music Therapy from New York University's School of Education in 1992. As a guitarist he is a long-time accompanist to jazz vocalist Lisa Sokolov, having appeared with her on numerous concert stages here and abroad.

**Larry Harlow**, co-composer of *¡Sofrito!* and director of The Latin Legends Band, is a classically trained pianist, a composer, and a producer.



Fascinated by Latin rhythms, he traveled to Cuba to study the music that would be called salsa. He returned to spearhead New York's salsa movement by helping to form the Fania famed All-Stars. He has made over 30 solo LPs and more than 15 LPs with the Fania All-Stars, and he has produced 150 LPs.

The recipient of six gold records, nominated for two Grammy Awards, and presented with numerous awards for composing, arranging, and producing, Larry Harlow has consistently been on Billboard Magazine's Top Ten Latin and #1 End-of-Year charts. When asked how he and David met, Harlow responded, "We met at a conference. He complimented my music after my set and introduced himself as a storyteller looking for music. I asked him to

tell me a story. I liked it, so I invited him over to my place and we wrote the music for *¡Sofrito!*. Some of the tales are folkloric, but the music is all original."

**Bobby Sanabria** is a Puerto Rican-American percussionist, who was raised in the Fort Apache section of the Bronx. He has performed with jazz and Latin greats. A composer and arranger as well as a drummer and recording artist, Bobby also teaches at the Manhattan School of Music at the New School for Social Research. He has released three instructional videos and CDs with Ascensión, his critically acclaimed ensemble. His CD *Afro-Cuban Dream... Live and in Clave* was nominated for a Grammy.



**Yomo Toro**, *cuatro* player and guitarist, was born in Puerto Rico into a family of amateur musicians. His father played *cuatro*, the 10-

stringed traditional and national musical instrument of Puerto Rico. At age six, Yomo began to play and by the end of his teenage years, he was playing *cuatro* and guitar professionally in San Juan. After settling in New York in 1956, he played and recorded with Trio Los Pachos and then recorded for the Fania label, ultimately joining the legendary Fania All-Stars. He played on the influential 1969 Larry Harlow Orchestra salsa recording entitled *Tribute to Arsenio* and on the classic Christmas album *Asaltró Navideño* with Willie Colón and Hector Lavoe. Yomo has performed on over 150 recordings, working with artists as musically diverse as Harry Belafonte, Paul Simon, and Linda Ronstadt. In addition to recording 20 solo albums for Fania and other labels, he has worked in television and film and performed extensively in the United States and abroad.

## ELEMENTS OF A STORYTELLING AND A MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

One unique aspect of a storytelling performance is that the performer must use his body with gestures, movements, rhythms, and especially voice to create characters, place, and time. There is usually no scenery, and few props. The scope and type of costuming varies from performer to performer. On a stage, there is often minimal lighting. A three-piece band performing an original score is incorporated into *iSofrito!* to help create and maintain the mood and ethnic flavor of the stories.



**action** - the series of events in a story or play.

**author** - the writer of a story, book, article, etc.

**band** - a group of musicians organized to play together.

**band director** - a person who oversees all aspects of a band.

**character** - a person in a story or play.

**composer** - a person who writes music.

**lyrics** - the words of a song.

**moral** - the teaching, usually relating

to right and wrong and the distinction between them, contained in a story

**music** - the art of combining vocal and/or instrument sounds in an ordered, harmonious, and expressive way.

**percussion** - the beating or striking of a musical instrument, or the clapping, tapping, or snapping of one's

fingers. The most common percussion instrument is a drum.

**plot** - the plan of events in a story or play.

**rhythm** - the pattern produced by the relative stress and duration of musical sounds.

**score** - a piece of music showing all the vocal and/or instrumental parts.

**stage** - the raised floor or platform especially in a theater, where a performance takes place.

**syncopation** - the stressing of normally unaccented beats, often used in African-derived music.

**theme** - the primary topic of a story or play.

## CUSTOMS, CULTURES, AND SOCIAL FORCES

The beautiful Caribbean islands of the Antilles share a common ancestry. Their heritage can be traced back to Indian, African, and European roots, as can the heritage of many neighboring mainland Latin American countries. The beliefs, customs, and traditions of these three groups have shaped the way people think, act, move, and even eat.

Although each island has diverse cultural practices, there are some shared celebrations such as *Los Posadas*, the procession commemorating Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem in search of *posadas* or lodging; *Día de los Tres Reyes*, Three Kings Day; and *quinceañera*, the coming of age celebration for a girl of fifteen. *Cuentistas* (kwen-TEES-tas), or storytellers, also evolved from the African, Taino, and Spanish traditions. The mysticism of migrating Indians, the musical instruments of Spanish *conquistadores*, and the rhythms and beliefs of enslaved Africans created a unique mix reflected in all the performing arts of the area.

By the time Columbus had arrived in Cuba in 1492 and Puerto Rico in 1493, the large population of Indians, the Guanahatabeyes and Siboney among others, had lived on the islands for about a thousand years. The more recent arrivals, the Arawaks or Tainos, had come from South America and other islands over one hundred years prior to the Spanish arrival. The native population did not fare well under Columbus, his crew, or the subsequent

## CUSTOMS, CULTURES, AND SOCIAL FORCES

(continued)

Spanish settlers. They were enslaved and abused, and had disappeared from the islands by 1780.

The *caciques* and *caciccas*, male and female chiefs and shamans of the Taino, were the storytellers for their village or tribe. Their stories often related the Taino's lives, animals, and local plant life to their particular religious beliefs. As the Taino were highly developed agriculturalists, many of their stories centered on natural phenomena and the mystical transformations that nature undergoes in the process of life, growth, and death. Their myths included themes of love and creation, the rivers and the sea, and even tobacco.

Although there is archaeological evidence that African explorers came to the Americas as early as 291 B.C., the vast majority were forcibly brought much later as slaves. These Africans were shipped to Cuba in 1511 and Puerto Rico in 1513. They were from many different tribes, but the dominant ethnic group was the Yoruba, who brought their language, customs, and religion with them.

Today, as in the 16th century, African griots (GREE-ohs) are storytellers, but also historians and major participants in ceremonies and festivals. Being a griot is an inherited and honored position. The griot who stays in the village memorizes the exploits of the chief and the history and genealogies of the tribe, while the traveling griot shares the news from village to village. The griot often



accompanies himself on the *kora*, a type of harp, or on a percussion instrument. Speaking the tales in rhythm and, sometimes, rhyme helps the griot remember long histories. During the African diaspora, the griot tradition spread throughout the Americas.

The folktale took on greater significance as African slaves were forbidden to communicate in their own languages and were prohibited from reading or writing in the language of their masters. Not only did the oral tradition continue to pass on African values, it also established a certain unity among the slaves. The trickster hare of Zaire, B'rer Rabbit, was popular for his cunning and ability to trick larger and stronger animals. The Ashanti trickster, Anansi the Spider, was admired for an ability to beguile. Above all their ability to survive in adverse situations was admired.

At the time of Columbus's first voyage of discovery, the Renaissance was flowering in Europe where humanist philosophy prevailed. Great advances were being made in science, astronomy, medicine, and the arts. Storytelling by minstrels or troubadours was a major form of entertainment and of spreading news during this period. These traveling troubadours could even cross battle lines to transmit their tales, and were particularly welcomed at the near-

est castle during the long dark nights of winter. They often set their tales to the music of the harp or lute, and would create sung ballads from the longer stories.

Spain had profited greatly from silk and spice trading with the east, but it was less tolerant than other European countries. The Catholic cardinals of the Inquisition exacted confessions or death from anyone whose thinking differed from Church precepts and opinions. Such attitudes were also reflected in the Spaniards' often inhumane treatment of conquered indigenous peoples. The plunder gained in Mexico and other parts of Latin America supported more conquests and Spain became a preeminent world power. Spain ruled the Caribbean, as well as Central and South America for over three hundred years. Spanish ballads, dance and love songs, harmonic stringed instruments, and flourishing trumpets came to the New World with the conquerors.

The African, Spanish, and Indian influences are also strongly felt in the music and dance of Latin America in the rhythms, the instruments, and the body movements. Instruments borrowed from African models include the *cabaza*, *repicador*, *botija*, *cencerro*, *marimbola*, *panderea*, *tambor*, congas, and *claves*. The Taino have contributed the *maracas* and *guiro*, while the *tiple*, *cuatro*, *violin*, *trompeta*, and *guitarron* come from Spain.

# STORYTELLING - AN ART FOR ALL AGES

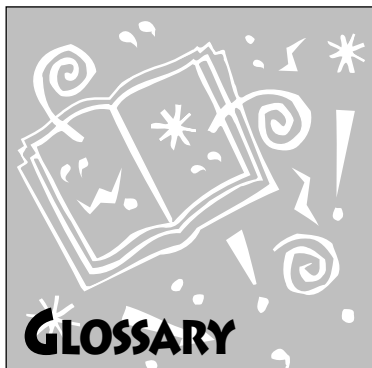
**S**torytelling is an art form that reaches back before recorded history, when people exchanged tales in the shadowy light of the fire. Before the written word, oral tradition was the only way to pass on information and knowledge. That is why every culture in the world has its own storytelling tradition. Stories were used to teach people how to behave properly toward one another, and to describe the consequences of ignoring the social mores of a particular culture. Stories were told of gods, great deeds, adventures of the past, or the sacrifices and labors of heroes and heroines who overcame evil against great odds. Stories also explained the natural events that people saw every day, such as the sun rising and setting, or the reasons for nature's fury as expressed in storms, earthquakes, and smoldering volcanoes. Tales even described spiritual journeys and visions. In stories, fools could become wise, the poor could become wealthy, and perseverance and goodness could be rewarded. Stories were told for lessons, for laughs, for tears shed, and for fears ignited or assuaged. The stories were passed down, generation after generation, by storytellers. Each teller would add something of himself or herself to the story, often updating it so the listeners could better relate to the tale and understand its message.

Through the ages, as stories grew in complexity, storytelling developed from a skill into an art. The master storytellers of the community were those who told stories most effectively, using the tools of gesture, voice, movement, rhythm, and humor. They understood that a tellable tale needs a strong plot, well-developed characters, believable dialogue, action, imagi-

native resolution, and colorful expression. They knew that different stories appeal to different audiences and may require different methods of telling. They incorporated music to create or change a mood, or to help tell longer stories, particularly historical ones.

The language of oral tradition has a different, more immediate beauty than the polished, carefully crafted expression of literature that is written to be read. The storyteller must be constantly aware of the audience and be able to tailor a story on-the-spot to achieve the desired response and communicate the message. The plot of a folk tale handed down for generations can be sparse. The vision and skill of the storyteller adds the poetry, brings the characters to life, and makes the listeners care about their destinies.

Storytelling may appear doomed in a technological age. Stories depicting today's culture seem to be relegated to films and television situation comedies. However, many folklorists have gathered the traditional tales of different cultures into collections of books, which are available in libraries. These collections illustrate the similarities in story themes from diverse cultures, making clear the universality of the stories. They also provide future storytellers with a wealth of stories to pass on. Fortunately, storytelling is flourishing thanks to national and regional arts organizations, folk arts programs, libraries and librarians, schools and educators, audiences, and the storytellers themselves. Storytellers still have a welcome place by the fire or on the stage.



**barrio** - a Spanish-speaking neighborhood in an American city.

**bomba** - a traditional African-derived dance music of Puerto Rico, featuring call-and-response and typically played on barrel-shaped *bomba* drums, *maracas*, and *guiro*.

**call-and-response** - a musical form in which a leader sings a line and a group or an individual responds by repeating the same line.

**Chango** - (shon-GO) a very powerful Yoruba deity, the spirit of fire, thunder, and lightning.

**Dia de los Tres Reyes** - Three Kings Day, celebrated 12 days after Christmas on January 6 to commemorate the arrival of the Three Kings who brought gifts to the Christ child. On the evening of January 5, children in many Latin countries leave out shoes or shoe boxes stuffed with straw for the Kings' camels and water to ease their thirst after the long desert journey. In the morning, the children find candy and gifts in place of the straw.

**diaspora** - a great migration or dispersion of people.

**fairy tale** - a tale about fairies, giants, magical deeds, or magic creatures, usually written by a specific author to be read or told aloud.



**folklore** - the traditions, beliefs, customs, and art forms of a group of people.

**folktale** - a story which is typically passed on orally and which may exist in many forms, e.g., myths, legends, anecdotes, animal tales, origin stories, moralizing tales, tall tales, yarns, and jokes.

**guiro** - a musical instrument made from a dried gourd with ridges carved on the side and played by rubbing a stick against the ridges.

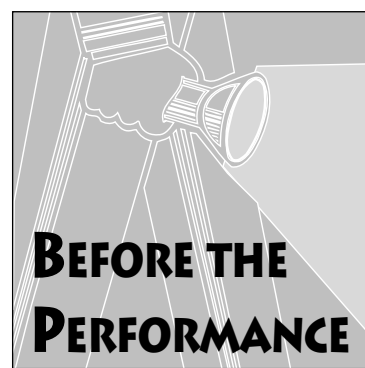
**jibaro** - the music identified with the interior mountainous regions of Puerto Rico, derived from the traditions of the Spanish settlers of these areas.

**oral tradition** - information passed down by word of mouth, not written.

**orisha** - (o-ree-SHA) a Yoruban deity, such as Chango, the god of fire and war. These gods have become, especially in Cuba, associated with Catholic saints.

**salsa** - a Latino dance music, which was first played by immigrant musicians in New York. It is based on Afro-Cuban forms and strongly influenced by American jazz. A typical salsa band includes brass, piano, bongo and conga drums, and bass.

**Yoruba** - a group of African people, living primarily in Nigeria, Togo, and Benin.



**1.** Read a selection of folk tales and fairy tales from Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, South America, Africa, or Spain. Do the stories tell of any magical events? Do they feature animals as characters? In what way are the stories similar? Discuss the use of magic, animals, humor, and morality. In what way are the stories different? Consider geography, weather, and customs. Do the differences affect the message of the story? Encourage students to remember this discussion and their conclusions when they attend *iSofrito!* (1.1, 1.3, 1.5)\*

**2.** Tell the class two short stories, one that really happened and one that is a fib. Make both as convincing as possible. Have the students vote on which is the real story and which is not. Discuss how they came to their conclusions, then reveal the true tale. Invite the students to tell their own tales of truths and fibs. Suggested topics: times you were most embarrassed, happy, sad, scared, lost, caught in a storm, received a wonderful gift, or spent a vacation with an eccentric relative. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3)

**3.** The stories in *iSofrito!* come from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the United States. Have students locate each of these countries on a map. Discuss what each has in common besides geographic proximity. (1.5)

**4.** Explanations of natural phenomena are found in creation myths and the “why” stories of every culture. Have





## AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

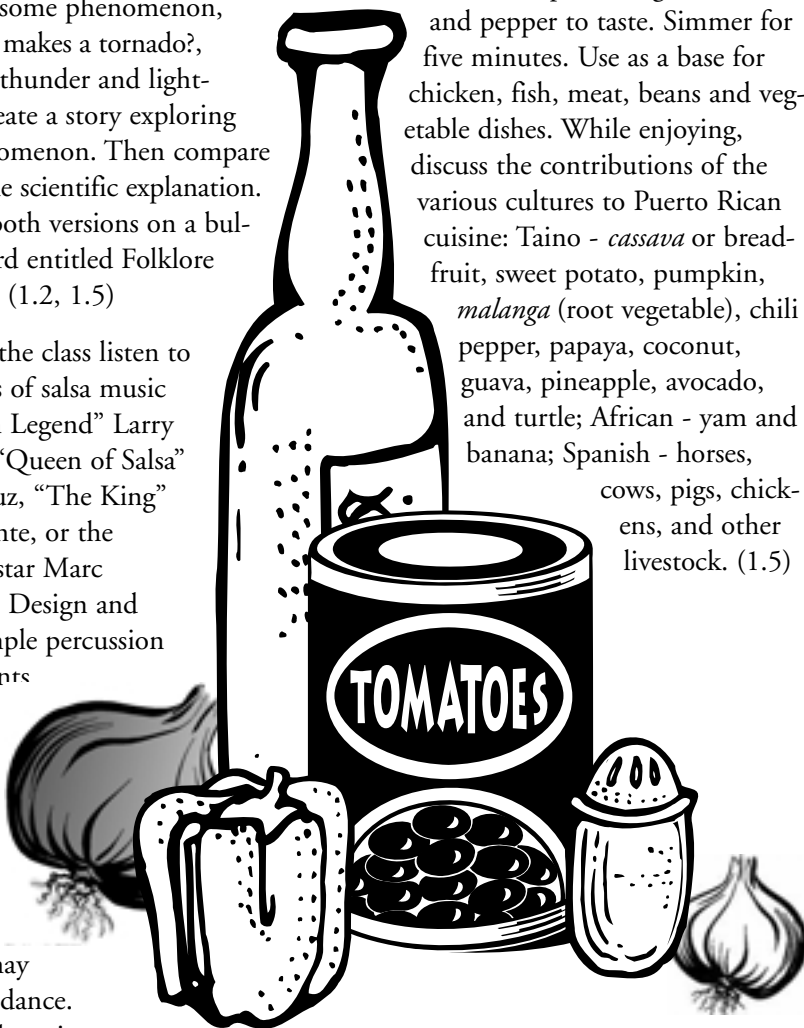
the class examine some of these tales from the Taino Indians of South America and the Caribbean and research the scientific reasons for the phenomena described. Compare and contrast these with “why” tales from other cultures. Display your findings. (1.1, 1.3, 1.5)

**5.** Ask students to invent explanations for some phenomenon, e.g. what makes a tornado?, what are thunder and lightning? Create a story exploring the phenomenon. Then compare it with the scientific explanation. Display both versions on a bulletin board entitled Folklore and Fact. (1.2, 1.5)

**6.** Have the class listen to selections of salsa music by “Latin Legend” Larry Harlow, “Queen of Salsa” Celia Cruz, “The King” Tito Puente, or the younger star Marc Anthony. Design and make simple percussion instruments that students may play along with the music. Others may prefer to dance. Discuss the primary

musical elements of the music and what effect they produce on the musician, the dancer, and the listener. (1.2, 1.3)

**7.** Make a *sofrito*. Saute 1 diced onion, 1 diced green pepper and 2 cloves of mashed garlic in olive oil until transparent. Add 1/2 can tomato sauce, 1 teaspoon oregano and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for five minutes. Use as a base for chicken, fish, meat, beans and vegetable dishes. While enjoying, discuss the contributions of the various cultures to Puerto Rican cuisine: Taino - *cassava* or breadfruit, sweet potato, pumpkin, *malanga* (root vegetable), chili pepper, papaya, coconut, guava, pineapple, avocado, and turtle; African - yam and banana; Spanish - horses, cows, pigs, chickens, and other livestock. (1.5)



\*Number(s) indicates the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standard(s) supported by the activity.

**1.** Ask each student to write a short review of the *iSofrito!* performance, describing the elements of the production and his or her reaction to the performance. What types of stories did David Gonzalez tell? What kind of music was performed? What was the most enjoyable aspect of the performance? Were there parts of the performance which he or she would change? Specific examples should be cited to support opinion. The critique can be written in the form of a letter to a friend, an essay, or a review for a newspaper. (1.1, 1.4)\*

**2.** In *The Man Who Could Make Trees Sing*, David Gonzalez relates an original story about his uncle. Ask students to write or share unusual stories about a relative or a friend which may be part of the oral tradition of their family. (1.1, 1.3)

**3.** In the story *Milomaki*, the main character is transformed into a beautiful tree and transcends his adversity. Have the class make a list of other fairy tales or folk stories in which a primary character is transformed into another person, animal, or object found in nature to achieve a goal or overcome a difficulty. Discuss the resolutions of these stories. Are there similarities among the stories? What are the differences? (1.1, 1.3)

**4.** Have a student or students who celebrate Three Kings Day describe the festivities to the class. What is the significance of the holiday? In which

## AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

(continued)



countries of the world is it celebrated? What activities, foods, and music are associated with the holiday? What other winter holidays students in the class celebrate? Compare Three Kings Day to other winter holidays. What are these holidays? How do they differ? What do they have in common? Light and candles are symbols and elements used in the celebration of many mid-winter holidays. Why do students think this is true? (1.5)

**5.** Have students research and report on the contributions of famous Latin Americans in the fields of politics, the arts, science, inventions, sports, and education. (1.5)

\*Number(s) indicates the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standard(s) supported by the activity.

## TEACHING SCIENCE THROUGH THEATER (GRADES K-8)

BY LORNA STAPLES, PH.D.

The NJ Core Curriculum Science Standards state that students will investigate the diversity, complexity, and interdependence of life on earth. By the end of Grade 4, students will be able to recognize that individuals vary within every species and they will be able to identify and describe external features of animals that help them to survive in varied habitats. The following activity outlines how theater can be incorporated into mastering these Standards.

When studying birds and their basic needs for survival, students often inquire how and what birds eat. To investigate how birds' beaks are specialized and adapted to their food, have students pretend that they are birds searching for food. Divide the students into groups of four and give each student in a group a different "beak" (clothespin, spoon, blunt-end scissors, toothpick). Give each group a different type of food such as "snails" (marbles), "grubs" (raisins), "bugs" (foam packing material), "worms" (macaroni). Tell students to pick up the "food" with their beaks and put it in clear plastic cups. Repeat the experiment with the next type of food until the beaks have caught all four foods. After students have recorded their observations, ask them what kinds of birds might have beaks that work like clothespins, spoons, scissors, and toothpicks and what types of food might they eat. If possible, make and place a variety of

bird feeders outside the classroom window or on the school grounds. Encourage students to look closely at the birds that come to the feeders. The Science Standards also state that students will gain an understanding of the structure, characteristics, and basic needs of organisms and students should know how organisms evolve, reproduce, and adapt to their environments.

The study of plant growth involves learning that each plant has basic needs and a life cycle that includes growing, reproducing, and dying. Pine cones can be used to observe seed growth and to determine factors needed for germination. Give each student a pine cone, rye grass seed, plastic cup, plant mister, paper towel. Tell each to mist the pine cone until it is thoroughly damp. Sprinkle the seeds into all the nooks and crannies of the cone. Place the pine cones in the plastic cups and observe that the scales of the dampened cones soon close. Place the cups and cones on a windowsill and wait 7-10 days for the grass to grow. The cones should be constantly damp, so spray or mist daily. During this lesson, students become familiar with the terms dormant state (sleeping seeds) and germination (waking seeds) as well as the elements required for germination (air, moisture, warmth) and continued growth (soil and sunshine). Based upon the seed sleeping, waking, and growing processes, ask students to write a script and act their play about little seeds germinating and growing into plants. Tell them to pretend that they are little sleeping seeds waiting to wake up. Ask them to call "Wake up, seeds!" Use lots of imagery such as spring rain, sunny days, warm soil, and

stretching seeds that begin to sprout and grow tall. This exercise will reinforce learning the steps in the planting/growing process.

The plant study also involves recognizing plants as a source of foods for humans. Have students grow such plants as corn and lima beans, initially in reclosable plastic sandwich bags followed by planting with soil in a plastic cup. After completing their experiments, have students take turns acting out the following poem:

My great corn plants  
Among them I walk.  
I speak to them;  
They hold out their hands to me.

My great squash vines  
Among them I walk.  
I speak to them;  
They hold out their hands to me.  
—Navajo

Students can be corn plants and squash vines, reaching out, while others walk through the stalks and vines. Ask them to think of other types of plants they could be and then act them out. Comment on the different ways that they can move and shape their bodies to represent each plant.

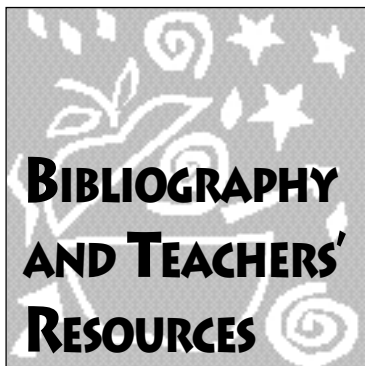
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Dr. Lorna Staples currently teaches 5<sup>th</sup> Grade at Cleveland Elementary School, Englewood, NJ.



### Books for Students

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### Books for Teachers

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Orozco, Jose-Luis, trans. *De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1994.

### Teacher's Resources

Museo del Barrio, 1230 5th Avenue, New York, NY, (212) 831-7272.

Caribbean Cultural Center, 408 W. 58th Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 307-7420.

Bilingual Publications (bookstore), 270 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012, (212) 431-3500.

For a catalogue of storytelling CDs, cassette tapes, books and albums write or call the *National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling (NAPPS)*, P.O. Box 309, Jonesborough, TN 37659 (Tel.: 615/753-2171).

### CDs

*iSofrito!* David Gonzalez and Larry Harlow and the Latin Legends Band, available at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com).

*City of Dreams*. David Gonzalez and the Poetic License Band with Bobby Sanabria, Yomo Toro, and others, available at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com).

*Larry Harlow's Latin Legends Band*, Sony International, 1998.

Selected recordings by Larry Harlow: *Tres*. Caiman, 1997.

*My Time Is Now*. Ache, 1991.

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# NJPAC

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center, which opened in October, 1997, includes the 2,750-seat Prudential Hall, the 500-seat Victoria Theater, the Lucent Technologies Center for Arts Education, a restaurant, banquet facilities, gift shop, convenient parking, and Theater Square, an outdoor performance space. A new kind of performing arts center, equipped to present world-class events representing every conceivable art form, both traditional and popular, NJPAC stands as a symbol of community, excellence in artistic expression, and international cultural exchange.

Since 1994, the NJPAC Arts Education Department has provided the state's children, families, and educators with creative programs that nurture exploration and discovery in the production and performance of the arts. The Verizon Passport to Culture SchoolTime Performance Series is one of the many current arts education offerings at NJPAC. Others include Arts Academy school residency programs in dance (Gr. 3-6), theater and literature (Gr. 5-12), and Early Learning Through the Arts – the NJ Wolf Trap Program (Gr. Pre-K-K); after-school arts residencies with United Way agencies; the Summer Youth Performance Workshop; and Professional Development Workshops that support the use of arts to enhance classroom curriculum. In association with statewide arts organizations and educational institutions, the Department sponsors Jazz for Teens, the All-State Concerts, The Star Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts, the Jeffery Carollo Music Scholarship, and a Summer Musical Production. Students have the opportunity to audition for admission to

these arts training programs during NJPAC's annual Young Artist Talent Search.

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